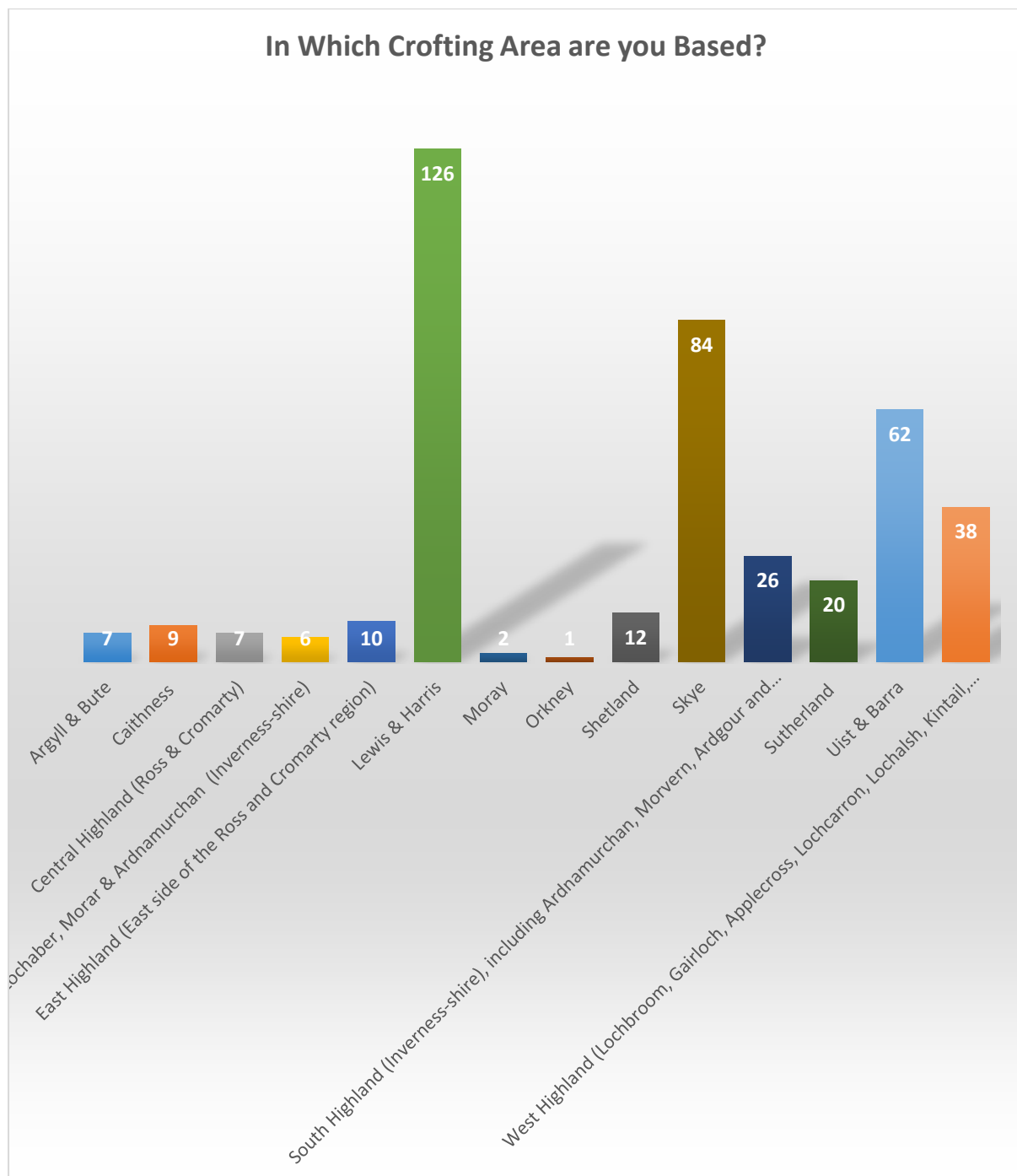


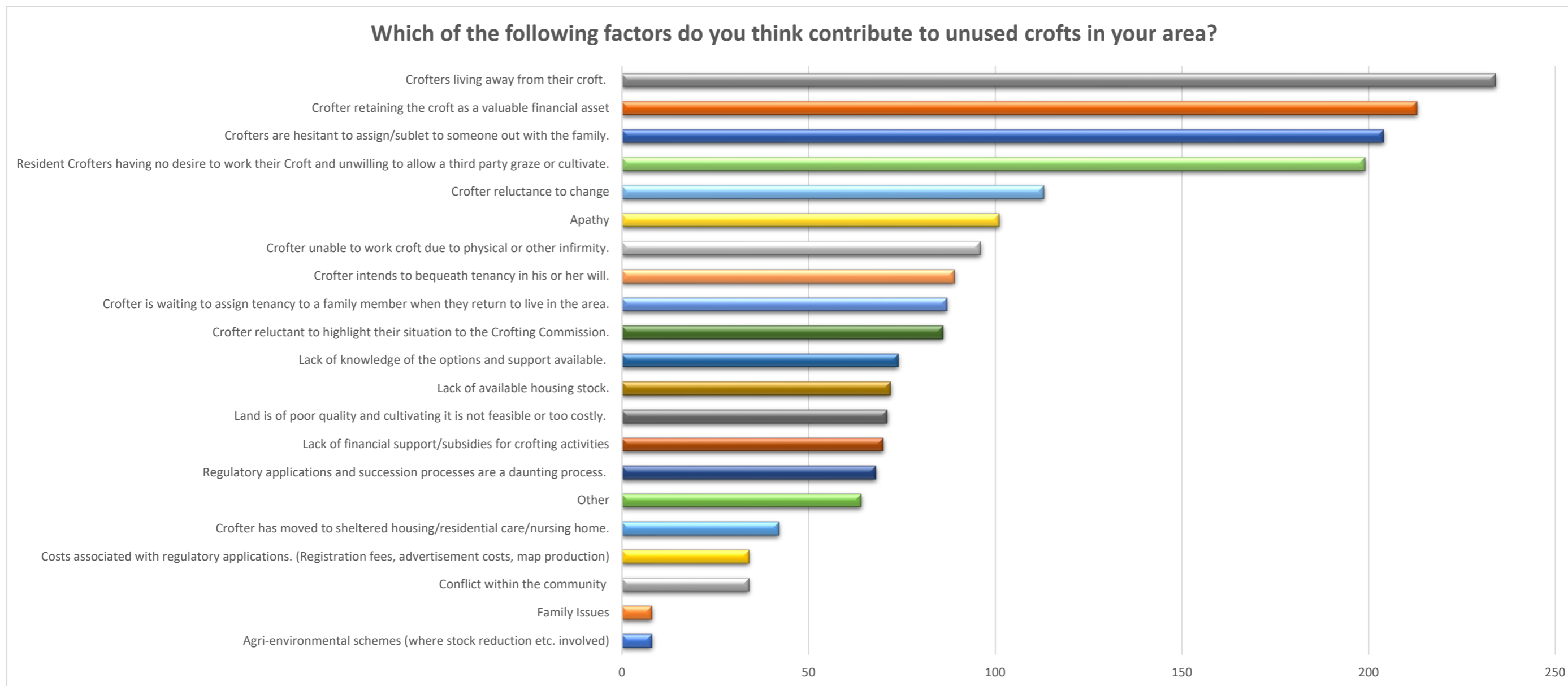
Croft Under-use and Availability Survey Results

A short anonymous survey was issued to the crofting community via the Commission's website and social media to get a better understanding of the issues surrounding croft under-use and availability. The results below give an insight into the most perceived reasons for unused crofts and what may help tackle this. The full survey results may be viewed [here](#).

The survey was open online for a month and generated 410 responses. Responses were received from across the crofting counties with most responses coming from Lewis & Harris followed by Skye & Uist as seen below.



Factors contributing to unused crofts

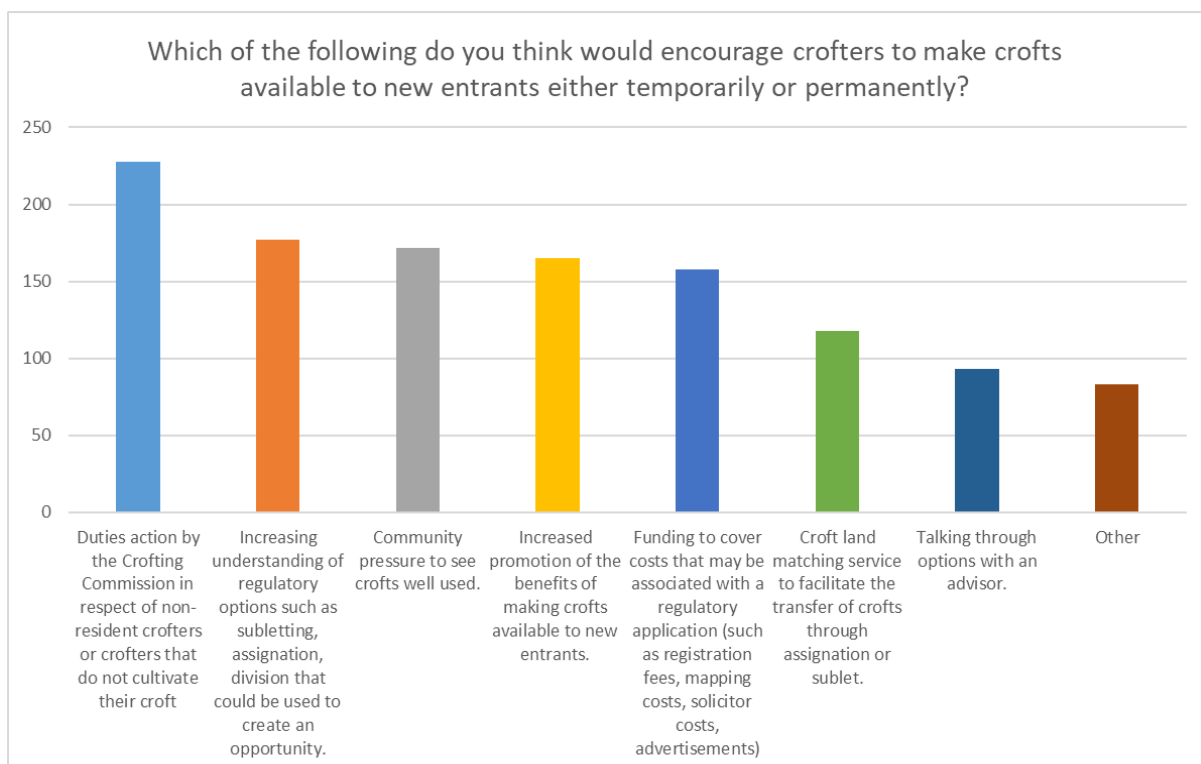


87% of respondents identified unused crofts as an issue in their area. As can be seen in the chart above, respondents listed the following four contributing factors as being the most prevalent by a significant margin.

- Crofters living away from their croft.
- Crofters retaining the croft as a valuable financial asset.
- Crofters are hesitant to assign/sublet their croft to someone out with the family.
- Resident crofters having no desire to work their crofts.

How to encourage crofters to make crofts available to new entrants.

90% of respondents indicated that lack of croft availability to new entrants is an issue in their area. Perceived factors to encourage crofters to make crofts available to new entrants are shown below.



The top four responses were:

- Duties action by the Crofting Commission in respect of non-resident crofters or crofters that do not cultivate their croft.
- Increasing understanding of regulatory options such as subletting, assignation, division that could be used to create an opportunity.
- Community pressure to see crofts well used.
- Increased promotion of the benefits of making crofts available to new entrants.

These top four responses point to a mixed approach to promoting new entrant opportunities. Enforcement work is top of the list and is seen as essential, but it can be supported by educational/promotional work and community pressure. The Development team will use these results to inform their work and priorities in the coming months, complementing the ongoing work of other teams within the Commission.